United Nations S/PV.6511

Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6511th meeting

Friday, 8 April 2011, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Osorio	(Colombia)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Dunlop
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Briens
	Gabon	Mr. Messone
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Ms. Ziade
	Nigeria	Mr. Edokpa
	Portugal	Mr. Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Mashabane
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1936 (2010) (S/2011/213)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

11-29308 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

Second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1936 (2010) (S/2011/213)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Ad Melkert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/213, which contains the second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1936 (2010).

I now give the floor to Mr. Ad Melkert.

Mr. Melkert: I would like to thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to brief the Council on the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the situation in Iraq. As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/213), while notable progress was made during the past four months, particularly with the formation of a new national partnership Government, many challenges remain.

The unfolding events in the region to which Iraq belongs and the persistent calls for change are of major significance. While Iraq has made remarkable strides in its democratic transition in recent years, which included the adoption of a Constitution, credible national elections, a broad national partnership Government and an opening environment for media and civil society, the people of Iraq are now demanding the dividends that were promised by their leaders. At the core of the protests that have been taking place across Iraq since 25 February are legitimate concerns about better employment opportunities, the delivery of basic services and accountability. Unless these demands are addressed, the political and democratic gains made thus far may seem hollow to many ordinary Iraqis, and this will be no easy task for the Government of Iraq.

How to create opportunities and respond to the aspirations of young people will be key. An estimated 78 per cent of Iraq's population is under 35 years of age, and 43 per cent is under 15. Youth constitute over 50 per cent of the total unemployment rate, about 1 million people. In addition, less than 40 per cent of children are enrolled in school after their primary education, and only 21 per cent are enrolled in the last two years of secondary school. These statistics paint a picture of a young population with few prospects for the future.

Iraqi elected officials are taking these issues seriously and have shown a renewed determination to act decisively. Prime Minister al-Maliki has tasked Cabinet ministers with ensuring that, within 100 days, viable plans are introduced to achieve tangible progress in the key areas of job creation and service delivery. Other initiatives have also been announced, including cuts in defence expenditures and Government salaries, as well as in tackling corruption.

Together with Deputy Special Representative for Humanitarian, Reconstruction and Development Affairs Christine McNab, on behalf of the United Nations country team, we initiated discussions with the Prime Minister on how the United Nations could further support his Government's efforts. Subject to the Government's approval and co-financing support, we proposed to implement a list of projects that could rapidly be expanded and fast-tracked to address, in particular, youth employment, health and nutrition, solid waste management, the public distribution of food rations and access to water. Specific initiatives were also proposed to support the dialogue between the Government of Iraq and civil society, with an emphasis on the promotion of human rights. In addition, next month, bilateral donors, the World Bank and the United Nations will meet with a Cabinet delegation to review the policy recommendations relating to Iraq's economic and social development and institutional capacity-building, which were presented to the Government by the Iraq Partners Forum in the so-called "Iraq Briefing Book".

Pending issues from the Government formation still require attention. The appointment this week of the

Minister of Planning will hopefully contribute to fostering progress on the social and economic front. I remain concerned, however, that agreement on key security ministerial portfolios has yet to be reached. With the announcement by Mr. Ayad Allawi, on 3 March, of his decision not to chair the proposed national council for higher policies, it is as yet unclear how power-sharing agreements reached during the Government formation negotiations in November 2010 will be effectively followed. I would therefore urge political leaders to set aside their differences and bring the Government formation process to a close. This should help the Government of Iraq to live up to its promise to those who voted in March 2010.

While developments in Iraq are no longer at the forefront of international media coverage, Iraq's stability is still under pressure. The targeting of various communities and terror attacks on Government structures, such as the one of 29 March against the Salahaddin provincial council building, which killed at least 76 people and injured almost 100 others, continue to remind us of destructive minds and agendas at play. Furthermore, the possibility that some may try to exploit some of the developments in the region to inflame sectarian tensions should not be discarded. While the overall trend in security incidents in recent months suggests a downward slope, an average of 25 incidents per day were still reported over the past month. Yet the Government, security forces and society continue their efforts to make decisive progress towards stability and normalization. As United States forces prepare to leave, Iraq should not be forgotten, and the international community should stand ready to continue its support.

The call for change in Iraq also reflects people's demands for stronger and more systematic observance of fundamental human rights. While the Government has explicitly upheld the principle of the right to demonstrate, violent incidents have taken place in different parts of the country, resulting in the deaths and injury of many Iraqi citizens. On a number of occasions, restrictions were placed on effective participation in demonstrations and on free reporting by the media. I hope that the relevant authorities will look into these incidents and take steps to ensure that these basic rights are protected. For its part, UNAMI is working closely with the Council of Representatives and the Government towards the establishment of an independent high commission for human rights. As the law is already in place, we have now been requested to assist with the recruitment of members and to advise on best practice.

As I speak, UNAMI is concerned about reports of recent violent incidents in Camp Ashraf, which have resulted in deaths and injuries. I reiterate that efforts are needed to stop violence and aim to peacefully resolve all issues. I would like to call on the Government of Iraq to enable a UNAMI mission to monitor the situation on the ground.

Stability and long-term prosperity in Iraq will also depend on progress made with respect to national reconciliation and, in particular, the resolution of disputed internal boundaries and the status of Kirkuk. In that regard, I would like to bring to the attention of the Council some of the recent events that have taken place.

As described in the report of the Secretary-General, following a day of demonstrations in Kirkuk province on 25 February, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) deployed about 5,000 Peshmerga forces into the province, effectively encircling the disputed city of Kirkuk. KRG authorities later explained that this was in response to the alleged threat of attacks against Kurdish citizens by former regime elements and extremist groups in the province. This movement of troops was not coordinated via the combined security mechanism established between the Iraqi Army and Kurdish Peshmerga forces under the auspices of the United States Forces in Iraq. In a meeting with President Barzani, I expressed my concern about this action and the fact that it occurred outside the framework aimed at preventing tensions on the ground along the disputed boundaries. On the basis of the most recent information, it appears that efforts from many sides have indeed led to the Peshmerga forces returning to their original positions.

Those events underscore the need for discussion on the future of the triangular combined security mechanism and the process to resolve the country's disputed internal boundaries. In line with the call by the Security Council on 15 December 2010 (see S/PV.6450) for intensified efforts to move towards a negotiated political agreement, UNAMI is exploring with Government and political leaders possible modalities to ensure such a process of dialogue. Building on the work of the high-level task force, which has led to better understanding on issues related

to property, language and detainees, as well as on the protection of minorities, I am pleased to report that some encouraging preliminary progress has been made.

With our assistance, on 27 March, an agreement was reached by Government officials and representatives of the main political parties to work with UNAMI on key outstanding issues through a standing consultation mechanism that would provide a forum for preventive multilateral consultation in cases of potential conflict. It was also agreed that further meetings in April and May would be held to discuss Kirkuk, Ninewa, the national census and the combined security mechanism. With respect to the future of that mechanism, if requested by the parties, I believe that UNAMI could play a possible liaising and facilitating role between all the parties with a view to maintaining peace and stability and in line with its mandate to develop "processes acceptable to the Government of Iraq to resolve disputed internal boundaries" (*resolution 1770 (2007), para. 2 (a) (iii)*).

Turning to the situation between Iraq and Kuwait, I would like to recall the importance of the resolutions adopted by the Council on 15 December (resolutions 1956 (2010), 1957 (2010) and 1958 (2010)), which accelerated the normalization of Iraq's standing within the international community. The Council's decision served as a strong incentive for Iraq and Kuwait to step up efforts to resolve outstanding issues between them. On 12 January, the Prime Minister of Kuwait, Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, visited the Government in Baghdad, the first such visit since 1991. During my visit to Kuwait on 1 February, I felt strongly encouraged by the commitment expressed by the Emir of Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and Government interlocutors to advance progress and the resolution of issues with Iraq as part of a full normalization of relations between the two countries, both of which recognize that they stand to gain from cooperation in all areas. Following that visit, I shared with both sides identical suggestions for a road map to address outstanding issues, in line with the guidance by the Secretary-General and the views expressed by Council members in December.

On 16 February, Prime Minister al-Maliki paid a historic visit to Kuwait, which provided an opportunity for an in-depth exchange of views on all issues relevant to both parties. Further evidence of a new chapter in the relations between the two countries was provided by President Talabani's attendance at the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the State of Kuwait and the twentieth anniversary of its United Nations-mandated liberation, in 1991. Importantly, members of Iraq's Parliament and representatives of its business community, media and civil society have joined hands with their Kuwaiti counterparts in looking ahead towards a brighter future. On 27 and 28 March, Foreign Ministers Sheikh Mohammad Al-Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and Hoshyar Zebari headed the first meeting of the joint ministerial committee established to look into all issues concerning the two countries, with the resolution of the outstanding Chapter VII issues as a priority. I have received reports from both Governments that the atmosphere of the meeting was quite positive and that the discussions on highly sensitive issues for both sides were constructive.

I am confident that the expected reaffirmation of the land and maritime boundaries pursuant to resolution 833 (1993) by the Government of Iraq is now within reach. In turn, there is now a basis for achieving full mutual understanding of the principle of unimpeded maritime access to Iraqi ports. I have expressed the hope that both parties will now seize this unique opportunity to show leadership in settling a complex and painful conflict, at a time during which the region is searching for new perspectives of cooperation and development as a substitute for conflict and stagnation.

Allow me to express my appreciation for the support that the General Assembly has provided in approving a substantial increase in UNAMI's budget to enable us to respond to the huge operational challenges we face. To become self-reliant, we need to generate a full range of logistics, security and life-support resources. We are doing so in close cooperation with the Government of Iraq and the Iraqi security forces.

However, there are many uncertainties, and at times cumbersome procedures, that may stand in the way of a seamless and timely transition. The situation confronting us is unprecedented, and further complicated by the urgent need to ensure the continued safety and security of our international and national staff. To that end, we look forward to, first, the continuation of Member State support through the provision of additional United Nations guards; secondly, final approval for the enlargement of our compound in Baghdad, which is a more cost-effective and quicker alternative to the original plan for new

construction, as a basis for the future one UN-house; and, thirdly, the construction of UNAMI premises in Kirkuk and Basra. I am pleased to report a generally productive level of cooperation with and support by the Government of Iraq, and we look forward to further results of our presence in the near future.

Finally, I would like to once again thank the Security Council for today's opportunity. On a personal note, I would like to add that while living and working in Baghdad, I have observed the start of the removal of endless lines of concrete T-walls over the past months. It is symbolic of considerable progress to overcome the years of war, conflict and sanctions that have plagued the country, and to bring normality to Iraq's international standing and the daily life of its people. Increasingly, the prospect for Baghdadis and residents of other parts of the country to regain the space and beauty of their cities no longer seems a dream of the past. With determination and decisiveness in Iraq, the United Nations is committed to assisting in building a better future for its people.

The President *(spoke in Spanish):* I thank Mr. Melkert for his very comprehensive and illustrative briefing, especially for his concluding words, which indicate very promising prospects, which we hope will come to pass.

I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Iraq.

Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. I would like also to thank your predecessor, Mr. Li Baodong, Permanent Representative of China, for his outstanding efforts during his presidency in the month of March. Our thanks also go to Mr. Ad Melkert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, and his team in Baghdad and in New York for their rigorous efforts in assisting the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi people.

My delegation has taken note of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) (S/2011/213) and would like to make the following comments.

At the political and security levels, the national partnership Government, led by Prime Minister Nuri Kamel al-Maliki, won the unanimous confidence of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, which also passed the Government programme of work on 21 December 2010. During his presentation of the platform of ministerial Government, the Prime Minister stated that the Government's goal would be to

> "build a federal, democratic, pluralist and unified Iraq with justice, equality and rule of law which gets its strength from religious and intellectual diversity and which cooperates in international and regional contexts, rejects aggression, terrorism, discrimination and sectarian division, and which respects human rights".

The programme of work for the Government of national partnership is based on a clear set of principles. Among those are maintaining and upholding the Constitution and political stability, expanding the base of participation in the political process, consolidating State institutions and building the rule of law. Those principles also include respect for human rights, rejection of aggression, terrorism and discrimination, and ensuring the right of all Iraqis to live in peace, security and freedom.

The programme of work also includes the completion of the building of the armed forces, the extension of the rule of law, the completion of the project of national reconciliation and the adoption of the principle of balance and efficiency in the management of the country. The programme of work also focuses on a culture of tolerance and brotherhood, the renunciation of violence, and, finally, working to maintain the best possible relations between Iraq and its Arab neighbours and at the regional and international levels.

The Government of national partnership was formed as a result of the political consensus achieved in November 2010 and will work vigorously, continuously and tirelessly to achieve all items on the ministerial work programme for the benefit of the Iraqi people. It is time for Iraq to reap the fruits of the patience it has displayed and the sacrifices and suffering it has endured so as to live in a better reality in terms of basic rights and services.

During the past two months, Iraq has witnessed a series of peaceful demonstrations that have put forward a number of demands related to improving services and the way of life of Iraqis. The position of the Prime Minister towards protesters has been clear, recognizing their right to express their views and raise their voices in the face of any faults or failings. Taking into account

the need for the maintenance of public order in the interests of the country and for security and stability not to be jeopardized, the Government has a duty to protect and listen to the voices of protesters in order to address their problems.

Following the peaceful demonstration organized on 25 February 2011, the Prime Minister said, in a public speech to the nation, that "Nothing that is objected to or protested will be ignored", adding that

> "I will personally continue the implementation of all matters that fall under my responsibility as President of the Council of Ministers as well as follow up the work of ministers and local governments to compel them to carry out the promises they made to citizens with gravity and responsibility".

That was followed by an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers, which set a period of 100 days after which the work of all ministries will be assessed to determine their success or failure in the performance of work assigned to them. The Council confirmed that it would make changes in the light of the outcome of the assessment.

The Iraqi security forces have continued to assume their responsibilities across the country and are demonstrating the highest degree of responsibility, discipline and ability to improve the security situation in the country. Reports of the Ministries of Health and of the Interior indicate that during the month of February 2011 Iraq witnessed a marked improvement in the security situation. The low number of people killed or wounded in bombings carried out by terrorist groups serves as clear proof of the efficiency and professionalism of the Iraqi security forces. During the meeting with top security leaders held on 3 March 2011, the Prime Minister emphasized the need to energize intelligence efforts through the development of effective plans for the intelligence authorities to defeat all hostile plots.

During a meeting on 23 January 2011 with António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki stressed that the Iraqi Government was keen to provide the basic necessities for daily living for displaced Iraqis, wherever they may be, and to meet the requirements that will enable the displaced to return to their places of origin. Reports suggest that about 89,000 families returned to their places of origin during the first quarter of 2011. Work is continuing in the Ministry of Displacement and Migration to double the grants provided to families to encourage them to return to their home areas.

At the social and economic levels, the Iraqi Council of Representatives approved the federal budget for 2011 on 20 February 2011, with an estimated amount of approximately $82 billion, the largest budget in the history of the Republic of Iraq. A total of $57 billion was allocated to fund the operating budget for the year 2011, with $25 billion allocated to support the investment budget for 2011. This new budget focuses on the aspects of services, scientific development and job creation as well as on raising the standard of living for citizens and supporting the momentum of reconstruction in the country.

Due to continued efforts by the Government to create thousands of jobs for Iraqis and the widening scope of private-sector activities aimed at establishing a number of projects, which have started to attract local labour, unemployment in Iraq has witnessed a significant decline. Currently, the unemployment rate stands at 15 per cent; in past years, it had ranged from 17 to 28 per cent.

Iraq's oil exports increased during the month of February, reaching about 2.2 million barrels per day. The Iraqi Government continues to implement plans to increase the amount of oil exported, which it projects will reach 2.75 million barrels per day this year, 3.3 million barrels per day in 2012, 4.5 million barrels per day in 2013 and 6.5 million barrels per day in 2014. The Iraqi Government is working on a range of projects aimed at increasing storage capacity for Iraqi oil production, from approximately 5 million barrels to approximately 20.7 million barrels by 2014, in order to ensure the stability of the flow of Iraq's oil to the international market.

The Iraqi Government is continuing with the organization of bidding rounds, which have taken place in the areas of oil and gas, to attract qualified companies with international experience able to develop the Iraqi oil industry. This reflects the increased oil and gas production and export capacity in Iraq, aimed at promoting economic development. The Oil Ministry recently announced the organization of a fourth bidding round, which will be held in the month of November, for the exploration of 12 new gas areas and the drilling of 10 wells to meet the shortfall in oil

production and inventory. This will result in increasing oil and gas reserves for future generations.

Marked improvement has been seen in the Iraqi economy following the introduction of a series of economic, investment and financial regulations by the Government, which have contributed to the increase in per-capita income, improved purchasing power and a higher level of social welfare. Through bidding rounds held in the areas of oil and gas last year, Iraq has brought international experience to these sectors, which will improve our ability to increase production and export capacity to promote economic development.

In the context of the Iraqi Government's efforts to find comprehensive solutions for the problem of housing, the Investment Authority of the Iraqi National Investment Commission has submitted a proposal to build 1 million housing units, at an estimated cost of approximately $30 billion. This would be the first stage of a plan to build 2 million housing units over the next five years to provide adequate housing for various segments of the Iraqi population.

In the context of Iraq's regional and international openness, the recent period saw a number of important visits, which I will detail in chronological order. In January, the Jordanian Prime Minister, Mr. Samir Zaid Al-Rifai, visited Baghdad to discuss issues of common concern to our countries. On 5 January, the Iranian Foreign Minister, Mr. Aliakbar Salehi, visited Baghdad to express his congratulations on the occasion of our formation of a Government of national partnership. Mr. Amr Moussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, visited Baghdad on 9 January to discuss Iraqi preparations to host the next Arab Summit. His Highness Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait, made a historic visit to Baghdad, on 12 January, where he met Prime Minister Nuri Kamel al-Maliki to discuss issues of common concern and how to develop bilateral relations between our two countries. The Vice-President of the United States, Mr. Joseph Biden, visited Baghdad on 13 January to discuss ways to develop relations between Iraq and the United States in various fields through the activation of the Strategic Framework Agreement. The Syrian Prime Minister, Mr. Mohammad Naji Ottri, paid a visit to Baghdad on 15 January to discuss the development of relations and expand the horizons of cooperation between our two countries. On 16 January, Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Foreign Minister of Turkey, visited Baghdad to discuss issues of common concern to Turkey and Iraq. On 26 January, Mr. Yuri Shafranik, Chairman of the Board of the Union of Oil and Gas Producers of Russia, visited Baghdad to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation in the field of investment in the oil and gas sectors. On 14 February, Ambassador Tan Sri Abdul Majid Khan, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, visited Baghdad to deliver a letter from the Malaysian Prime Minister on ways to expand the horizons of bilateral cooperation in various fields. Chinese Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Zhang Zhijun paid a visit to Baghdad on 23 February to discuss the development of bilateral relations and the expansion of cooperation between our two countries. Mr. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, visited Baghdad on 16 March to discuss means of cooperation between Iraq and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The Turkish Prime Minister, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, visited Baghdad on 28 March to discuss bilateral relations, ways of promoting such relations, the situation in the region and issues of common concern. Yesterday, United States Defense Secretary Robert Gates visited Baghdad and held meetings with President Jalal Talabani, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki and other Iraqi leaders regarding the status of a mutually agreed security pact between the two countries.

At the same time, Iraqi officials have also worked hard to promote bilateral relations on the regional and international levels. President Jalal Talabani paid a visit to Damascus for a meeting with Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad on 12 February to discuss ways to develop bilateral relations. On 25 February, President Talabani visited Kuwait, where he met the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and to participate in the celebrations of the State of Kuwait's independence and liberation. Prime Minister al-Maliki visited the State of Kuwait on 16 February and met with His Highness the Emir and His Highness the Prime Minister to discuss the development of relations and the expansion of cooperation in various fields. During this visit, agreement was reached on activating the work of joint committees and convening a meeting of the Iraq-Kuwait joint ministerial committee, headed by the respective Foreign Ministers, to resolve all outstanding issues. The President of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, Osama Al-Nujafi, also visited Kuwait, on 20 March. During his visit, an agreement was made with Mr. Jassim Al-Kharafi, Chairman of the Kuwaiti National Assembly, to form a committee to coordinate the work of friendship between the two countries. The Iraqi Minister of

Foreign Affairs, Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, paid a visit to Cairo on 2 March to preside over the work of the 134th session of the Arab League Council to discuss current developments in the region. On 19 March, Foreign Minister Zebari visited Paris to participate in the ministerial summit in support of the Libyan people, during which he gave a speech emphasizing the position of Iraq in support of the Arab and international consensus for the enforcement of the no-fly zone to stop military operations against civilians and support the Libyan people in realizing their aspirations for a decent life. Mr. Zebari visited Kuwait on 27 March to co-chair the first meeting of the Iraq-Kuwait joint ministerial committee.

Iraq, in line with its will to strengthen relations with Arab countries and its commitment to playing a leading role in supporting and strengthening the Arab joint work system, has accepted the challenging task of hosting the next Arab Summit, to be held in Baghdad in May. This decision was based on Iraq's assertion that it has returned to normal relations with its Arab brothers and that we are working to strengthen relations with the Arab community. Iraq's determination in this is supported by all Arab countries and confirmed by their participation in the Summit.

The convening of the Arab Summit in Baghdad comes at a crucial and sensitive time for the Arab world. The revolutions that have taken place in Tunisia and Egypt, the painful events in Libya, and the expansion of demonstrations and protests in a number of Arab countries have given Iraq a leading role in the Arab world. This situation emphasizes the need for the Summit to proceed on schedule, in order for the transformations in the region to be dealt with and appropriate solutions found, in keeping with the aspirations and hopes of the Arab peoples.

On 15 December 2010, the Security Council held a historic meeting on Iraq (see S/PV.6450), at which it adopted three important resolutions — 1956 (2010), 1957 (2010) and 1958 (2010). Those resolutions represent the beginning of the end of the era of the sanctions and restrictions that were imposed on Iraq after the Saddam regime's crime of invading Kuwait. Despite these positive achievements, Iraq still has some way to go to resolve all outstanding issues with our brotherly neighbour Kuwait.

During the visit to Baghdad of His Highness Sheikh Naser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait, on 12 January, Kuwait and Iraq agreed to set up a joint ministerial committee under the chairmanship of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of our two countries to address outstanding issues between us. During the visit of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki to Kuwait on 2 February, it was agreed to set a date for the joint ministerial committee to meet.

The committee held its first meeting in Kuwait on 27 and 28 March, during which four sub-committees considered all the issues that concern the two countries, whether of a bilateral nature or relating to the situation between Iraq and Kuwait in the light of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The importance of the joint committee's meeting lies in its being the first of its kind, its consideration of issues sensitive to both parties, its atmosphere of openness and transparency and the positive spirit that dominated the proceedings.

Let me now comment on the issue of Camp Ashraf, which was raised by Mr. Melkert. I do not have any information on what happened yesterday, but I know the position of the Iraqi Government, namely, that it considers the people in Camp Ashraf as refugees and that they have rights. It will not force them to go back to their country of origin, Iran, but will encourage them to go to a third country. However, when United States forces handed over responsibility for Camp Ashraf to the Iraqi forces and the Iraqi Government decided to establish a police station there, the people in Camp Ashraf used violence against Iraqi security and police forces, which resulted in deaths and injuries. We always try to solve this kind of problem peacefully and we encourage third countries to accept these people as refugees.

In conclusion, I would like to stress my Government's gratitude for UNAMI's role in Iraq and for Mr. Ad Melkert's support offered in response to the Government's request and based on mutually agreed mechanisms.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ambassador Hamid Al Bayati for his briefing.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.